

# CUENCA expats magazine

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## Duráns of Grafisum

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ISSUE  
**15**

Cuenca Expats Magazine  
Cuenca, Ecuador

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Cover Photo



Printer



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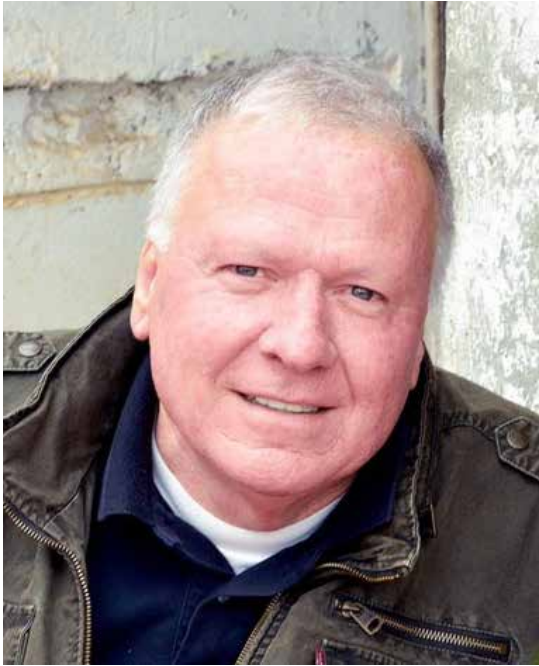
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A promotional banner for the expatsmags.com website. It features a dark blue background with white and red text. At the top, it says "visit our NEW WEBSITE" with a hand cursor icon pointing to the text. Below this, the website name "expatsmags.com" is written in large, bold, red letters. A white mouse cursor icon is positioned over the end of the website name. Underneath, it encourages users to "Download Past Issues", "Watch videos", and "Subscribe to our Events &amp; VIP Club to receive the latest news". It also says "find us on" followed by "YouTube" and "facebook" logos. At the bottom, it says "as Cuenca Expats Magazine" with arrows pointing to images of the magazine's website displayed on a laptop, tablet, and smartphone. The laptop screen shows the magazine cover for Issue 12, featuring a photo of three people and the text "Dr. Fabián Pato of Orthodontics Clinic".

# PUBLISHER'S LETTER



Farewell my friends. When you read this I will be on my way to a new and different adventure.

I am so grateful for the time I've had here in Ecuador. It has truly been a life changing experience. So many challenges and so many rewards. The new, lifelong friendships I have made here are what I cherish the most.

Thank you Ed and Maite for asking me to be a part of this great publication. It has been such a pleasure working with both of you and the rest of our hard working team.

And I will let Mark Twain have the last word here, because in these uncertain times, he says how I feel so perfectly.

"Travel is fatal to prejudice, bigotry, and narrow-mindedness, and many of our people need it sorely on these accounts. Broad, wholesome, charitable views of men and things cannot be acquired by vegetating in one little corner of the earth all one's lifetime."

Hope to see you soon, somewhere around the world.

*George* / [www.ecuadorgeorge.com](http://www.ecuadorgeorge.com)

## FYI Bon Voyage George!

As you've read above, Ecuador George is now World Traveler George. The owners and staff of Cuenca Expats Magazine have been privileged to know and work alongside him since the very first Issue. As we believed in the beginning, there was none better to be the Magazine's Ambassador to the expat community than George.

We're sure you have enjoyed as much as we have, reading his Publisher's Letter and blog over the months. And George

was sure to light up any situation with his witty comments and insights, being a true joy to be with.

George will be missed as a member of our expat community, but like many, he sees an opportunity for adventure. We wish him well. We also hope George will agree to become our Publisher at Large and periodically bring us reports of his world travels. Can't wait to read them.

Hasta la próxima, good friend!

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presents  
Beer of the Month



*Nitro Stout*

## Nitro Stout

Black as a moonless night sporting a thick, creamy tan head. A malt forward style with notes of coffee and chocolate. A medium heavy mouthfeel almost chewy. A proper pour is worth the wait!

Stats: **25 IBU, 100 EBC, 6% ABV**

Food Pairing: **The Pub Burrito picante**

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# The DURÁNS OF GRAFISUM

by Madelaine Barry

Photography by Ruffolo Design Photography

Have you ever wondered what goes into publishing and printing the free, monthly “Cuenca Expats Magazine?” I am somewhat aware of the side where the salespeople secure advertisers who pay for their space and also persuade businesses to have a Business Spotlight written for them to promote their product or service. Once I get an assignment, I meet the advertiser and ask the questions that I, and hopefully readers, would want to know the answers to. One thing I had no idea about was the actual printing of the Magazine. I know the cover is always visually appealing with photographs by Ruffolo Design Photography, with individuals featured against a white background and the red print. After interviewing the team that owns “Grafisum,” I now know a bit more about the nuts and bolts of printing out the high-quality magazine you have in your hands! I also know why Ed Lindquist, Managing Partner of Cuenca Expats Magazine, tells everyone what a delight it is to work with Grafisum.

If you lived in Cuenca about 20 years ago, you might remember a stationery store, or papelería, with the same name “Grafisum,” which means graphics and supplies. It occupied the corner of Benigno Malo and Simon Bolivar, in front of Tosi is now. The store sold office supplies such as paper, notebooks, and writing utensils for about five years.

All the while owner John was fascinated with machinery; how things are made. Going out on a career and financial limb, John sold his car and invested in a one-color printing machine. He and Dora searched for a building to accommodate this side business when they lucked upon an old chemist’s building that the bank had foreclosed on. That is the current site of Grafisum on Darwin off Remigio Crespo. For about two years Dora handled the papelería while John spent his time building the printing shop starting with business cards, stationery, and flyers. They laugh about the old days when they had to mix the ink by hand, create the plates, do all the folding and stapling while working in a small dark room. How things have changed since those early days!

The team of John Durán, his wife Dora Cordoso and now their son Juan Durán head up this impressive facility, continuing to serve Cuenca for 26 more years. Creativity expresses itself as well, through their son José, an up-and-coming musician who is also very knowledgeable about many aspects of the business.

One word that came up several times in the interview is the idea of Fidelity - a trust and allegiance that they create with their clients and staff. Being on time and following through on promises made, is of utmost importance to the family. Grafisum employs nearly forty people from billing to buying supplies to detail work to machine overseers to the design team.

Although John did not inherit the business, son Juan has been around it his whole life and is now learning all aspects with an eye for inheriting it when his parents retire. In fact, the family home is adjacent to the shop, an idea that son Juan does not think is healthy. While Dora had thought it was very convenient to be so close while their children were growing up, Juan thinks you should not live where you work. This situation will take care of itself in a few months as Dora and John will be moving into an apartment, leaving the house site for business expansion.

A look around the shop downstairs reveals a workspace humming with activity. While their very first printer is still in a corner, there are now two and four color machines busy turning out printed materials and workers coordinating it all. Full capacity is about 15,000 pages per hour. The machines, imported from Germany and Japan, have specialized jobs to complete, often replacing tedious human labor. There are also special-duty machines that do die cutting, hot gluing and folding. The workers add personal touches like applying stickers and stitching. The four machines make all the colors you see in the magazine from just yellow, blue, red and black. Other colors are mixed to produce the variety you see in the pages.

Juan explains that the business has four angles: editorial, publicity, packaging and the newest trend, digital. There are trade fairs in Germany that the family attends to see the latest technology and connect with their producers. One significant change Juan has seen through the years is that while it is still cheaper to print in volume, now they can print out one book at a time versus a minimum to make it worth their while. Charges

> cover story

vary by the number of pages and page size, colors used, and the finishes on the front and back covers.

While they are not the largest printing company in Cuenca, they pride themselves on creating (that word again) fidelity, with their clients. Major clients include Indurama, Colineal, Banco del Austro, Almacenes Juan Eljuri, Continental Tire, Toyota, Corporación Azende, Jaher, Universidad de Cuenca, S.R.L., the Mayor's office and more.

As my interview comes to a close, I have to ask about the elephant in the room: John's fire truck collection. The collection resides on shelves taking up two sides of his office and range in size from small Matchbox trucks to large Tonka Truck size reflecting his decade of volunteering in the Cuenca Fire Department. Many family meals and events were disrupted when John got the call to put out a fire! Besides the usual duties, he was a specialist in paramedics and diving rescue and often traveled to neighboring countries to teach his skills.

So now, you have a glimpse into the undertaking involved in printing out Cuenca Expats Magazines. Each month they gear up to print the 3,000 copies, which takes three days, eight hours a day.

The next time you have any printing needs, do come and see the family business Grafisum and see how they can help!



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**Featuring the production process:**

First, the client's artwork is laid out by the designer who digitally creates camera-ready color separations for the plate maker.



Thin sheets of aluminum are turned into printing plates for the presses.



At the master control for the press, the operator sets up the print run.



At each of the 4-color towers the appropriate plate is loaded and settings are dialed in.





The large Heidelberg 4-color offset press can print up to 6 magazine-size pages on each sheet of paper. In the plant there is also a somewhat smaller press for printing smaller and special jobs, like the magazine cover.



Hot off the presses!



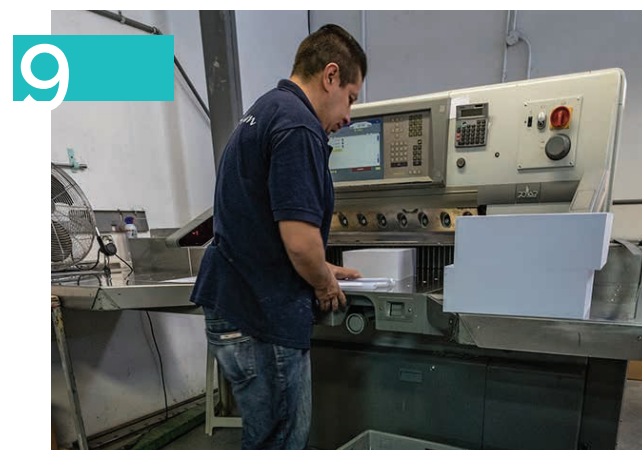
Pressmen check their output.



Selective spot enhancements such as spot varnishing are applied by hand.



After printing is completed it is trimmed to size.



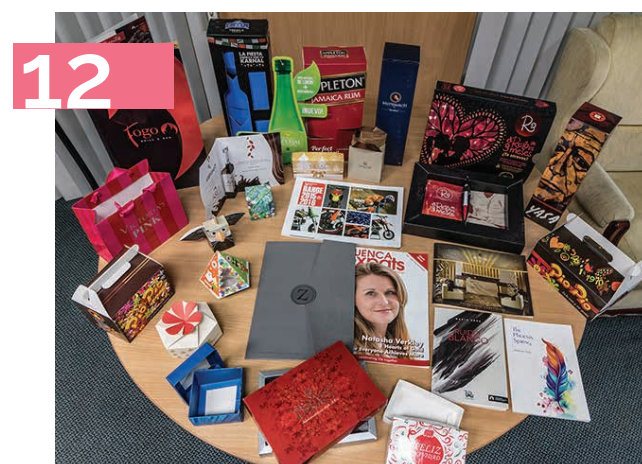
Several aspects of specialty work are done by hand.



Some special operations such as die cutting or embossing can still be done effectively on older machinery.



Finally, the client receives gorgeous finished products such as the ones shown here.



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Juan Fernando Córdova

## Introducing Dot Sandwich 100% Natural Ingredients to Create the Best Favors

By Cecilia Chabla Walters

"A small business with quality food" is how Juan Fernando Córdova describes his new restaurant, Dot.Sandwich. Though the place isn't large, it definitely has a comfortable and enjoyable atmosphere. Their main focus is on home delivery and take out. It's location, near the Stadium, makes it very convenient to order out.

The menu, on the other hand, is both varied and substantial. From the roast beef to the pesto and arugula veggie sandwich. Anything prepared here is worth a try. The flavor combinations taste gourmet yet homemade, improbable as that may be.

"Everything we have is made from scratch, all of our ingredients are 100% natural," said Juan Fernando, a young Cuencano, whose time spent traveling outside Ecuador has positively influenced his tastes beyond cooking school. "While traveling through Europe I became aquatinted with so many types of food and different ways of preparing food." Juan Fernando also owns a sushi bar next to Dot.Sandwich where he is the main chef.

Sandwiches worth trying are the Fris Beef, made with roast beef, the Banh Mi, a Vietnamese teriyaki style chicken sandwich, and the barbecue sandwich, made of twelve-hour roasted pork.

There are three types of bread to choose from: white, whole wheat and flatbread. Dot.Sandwiches come in two sizes: regular around \$5.50 and grande around \$7.50. And a tasty novelty you can add is French fries with "fresh veggie fingers" for only \$1.50.

For the younger clientele there are some choices: The Jr. Beef and Jr. Chicken sandwiches. The salads include a good selection of fresh vegetables, homemade pesto and vinaigrette. Protein (beef or chicken) can be added at an extra cost.

So the next time you want to eat healthy at home but don't want to do the cooking or deal with the traffic, call 2884271 and order something delicious that is also nutritious. The staff at Dot.Sandwich is very friendly and they speak English.



Roast Beef



Banh



Pulled Pork Flat Bread

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## Chocolate

# The World's Number One Longevity Food

by Susan Schenck

Photograph by Ruffolo Design Photography



Ecuador has some of the finest chocolate in the world. I've been giving healthy food classes for nearly five of the six years I've lived in Cuenca, and never have I met an expat attendee that didn't love chocolate.

*But nearly all are surprised when I tell them it's a superfood conducive to longevity. A Mexican woman chocoholic is alive today at age 127; a French woman died at the age of 122 who ate several ounces of chocolate per day; and a man in Arizona credits chocolate as part of why he's still alive at the age of 114.*

Our local expat chocolate lovers include Liz Harrison of Trinidad (and the US) who adores the ability to eat this treat while on a low carb diet. Kasandra from Poland (and the US) feels it's "the food of the gods." Georgina Nunez of Holland (and the US) says it's "love for the lonely woman." She's right: chocolate contains phenylalanine, an amino acid that induces romantic feelings and plays a key role in dopamine production. Janice Ruffolo of the US claims, "Chocolate is a delicious feel good treat and raw cacao nibs give the taste and benefits of chocolate without the sugar." (She mixes a tablespoon of nibs on chia pudding.) Mimi Phoebe of Canada says, "Chocolate is sexy, sensual and very blissful!" She is right, actually, as the

arginine in chocolate is a well-known aphrodisiac, making it popular on Valentine's Day. Chocolate also contains cannabinoids, which sometimes gives us the feeling of being blissful and even "high."

### **No wonder chocolate is so popular.**

To receive most the benefits, chocolate must be dark—70% cacao or more. (Anything over 80% is very bitter.) The darker the chocolate, the less the sugar and the higher the antioxidants. Dark chocolate versus milk chocolate is like comparing a rich Ecuadorian café Americano to an instant powdered decaf. The kick and the taste of the real thing powerfully outshines that which is diluted with sugar and fillers. Chocolate contains theobromine, similar to caffeine, which makes it a perfect "pick-me-up" snack. For this reason, I won't eat chocolate after 3:00PM. It's also known by all diet companies for its appetite suppressant quality, making chocolate bars and shakes very popular. In recent years research has proven that chocolate actually feeds our beneficial gut microbes, enhancing our digestive function, immunity and overall health. It's also rich in magnesium, zinc, fiber, and the mood-enhancing amino acid tryptophan. In addition, it contains

cardiovascular cleansing compounds N-caffeoyldopamine and N-coumaroyldopamine and their analogs.

To get the most out of it, consume chocolate in its raw form, so that none of the antioxidants have been destroyed by heat. The Pacari brand produces raw organic chocolate bars. Arawi is a local company that sells raw organic powdered cacao. Other Ecuadorian organic chocolate brands include Takal, Chuchukululu, Hoja Verde, and Mashpi. You'll find a wide choice of chocolates with a variety of cacao content offered at the new natural health food store Pacha Kuna.

White chocolate is the fatty part, and is rich in healthy fats, great for cooking. If I make truffles, I use this part (with the dark chocolate) to prevent them from melting at room temperature. Cacao butter is also great for cooking and using in homemade non-toxic skin creams.

Here is a favorite one-minute recipe. Mix one tablespoon of raw organic cacao powder, one tablespoon of coconut oil, and one tablespoon of raw honey in a tea cup with a spoon. Blend till creamy. You can also add in some jungle peanut butter or sprinkle with a few chopped nuts.

Another easy recipe my students love: raw chocolate mousse. Blend (preferably in a food processor) one ripe avocado with ½ cup of each of the following: raw honey, coconut oil, and raw powdered cacao. This creamy chocolatey dessert is sure to "wow" your guests and is a hit at every expat potluck I've taken it to.

**Cacao cautions:** go easy on it if you're prone to insomnia or herpes outbreaks. If taking MAO inhibitors to treat depression, or if you have severe coronary issues, chocolate is contraindicated. Always keep it away from dogs, as it could kill them!

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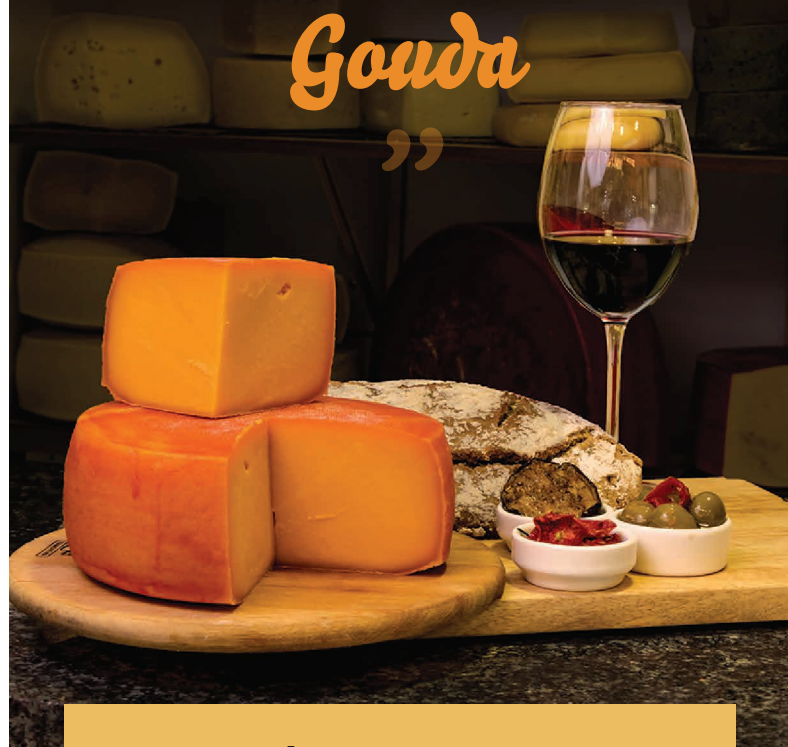
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presents

Cheese of the Month

“  
**Gouda**  
”



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It's typically made from pasteurised cow's milk although some varieties use sheep or goat's milk to produce cheeses that are going to be aged for a long time.

The Gouda can be paired with beer, a fruity Riesling or Chenin Blanc, and can even complement wines that are deeply flavoured such as a rich Merlot or Shiraz.

*Bene Placito* is an artisan goods store focused on the needs of the expat community. We sell Italian aged cheeses and complements such as wine, olive oil, honey and much more. We also specialize in New York style pastries and other baked goods.

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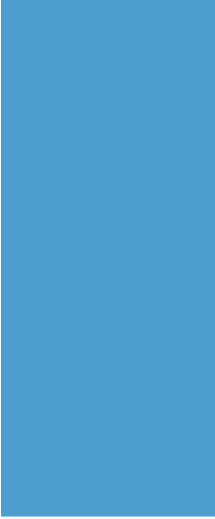


## FIESTAS DE CUENCA

by Ruffolo Design Photography

Independence of Cuenca is a public holiday in Ecuador, celebrated on November 3. The city won its independence from Spain on November 3, 1820. People from all cities of Ecuador come to Cuenca to celebrate its Independence Day, participate in the largest festive event of the city, enjoy colorful parades, dance and music performances and shop at hundreds of venders. A great party enjoyed by all.





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# Casa Lloret

HOSTAL



## Casa Lloret

### Your Home Away From Home in Cuenca

By Madelaine Barry - Photographs courtesy of Casa Lloret

Once you enter the gates of Casa Lloret B&B, you forget about your troubles and the clamor of the city. The long driveway brings you past a beautiful home where the owners live and past the suites to where the reception area is. Gustavo Lloret is the 26-year-old host who will welcome you to this bed and breakfast. This enclave was given to the family by Gustavo's grandfather and transformed by father and brother architects to the quiet setting it is now. This is a residential area adjacent to the Yanuncay River and close to parks and Mall Del Rio. The buildings are modern, yet with a local flair and are currently decorated for the Holiday season.

Gustavo started out going to college for engineering but switched to hospitality and gastronomy at the University of Cuenca. When his sister married and moved away, it coincided with him finishing his degree, so he took over the hosting and administration duties of the property. Gustavo admits that when he has guests, he has to be on-call from 7 am to 11 pm, but it's what he enjoys. When you live where you work, it is not easy to get a break, but he does manage to get away. Holiday time with family sometimes needs to be rescheduled since that is a busy time for the B&B. Cuenca's festivals and carnivals bring thousands of visitors, and they need to be accommodating for potential guests when they come to town.

Included is a hearty American breakfast from 7:30 to 10 am and that's when Gustavo checks in with guests to see how well they slept and how he can make their stay more pleasant. The shared kitchen is available for guests to prepare meals.

Casa Lloret can host up to 28 people in seven single and double rooms plus two suites with small kitchens. Comfortably furnished rooms with high-quality toiletries and 24-hour hot water (which can be a rare thing in Ecuador) make Casa Lloret an incredible destination.

Plans include possibly adding a cafeteria in part of the large family home when his parents relocate and maybe even another casa in Quito. But, for now, Gustavo has his hands full with the currently booked guests. He has many return customers, and that is the best indicator of success. In fact, several of his guests came up with the observation that this felt like their home away from home.

Prices start at \$48 and go up to \$110 for a family suite that sleeps four. Imagine if you had relatives coming in for the holidays and you couldn't put them up yourself? Casa Lloret would be the perfect solution!

Contact Gustavo for weekly rate specials and large group discounts. To entice customers, Gustavo will offer a 15% discount for bookings if you bring in this article. He hopes to see you soon!

Carlos Quinto 3-12 and Isabel La Católica  
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f Casa Lloret B&B

## Todd & Sheila Johns

by Susan Herron



Have you ever had one of those sudden shifts in life where you knew that what you were doing may not be completely rational but felt like the right thing to do anyway? That is what happened to Todd and Sheila Johns, and it explains how they came to be living in Cuenca.

### Where did you live before moving to Cuenca?

We lived in Washington DC for over 30 years.

### What did you do before moving to Cuenca?

**T:** I was a radiologist.

**S:** I have always been an active musician.

### What were your family and friend's reaction when you told them you were moving to Ecuador?

**T:** Our son lives in Dubai, so he is already an expat. He was excited for us!

**S:** Our daughter was understandably not happy at the prospect of having her entire immediate family living outside of the US. Most of our friends were simply puzzled by our "radical" decision, but interestingly, both of our elderly mothers thought it sounded like a wonderful adventure!

### How long have you been here?

**T:** I moved here in June of 2014, and Sheila joined me in August.

### When and why did you start thinking about living overseas?

**S:** We did not have it on our radar to move overseas at all until after Todd visited Cuenca for the first time.

**T:** In 2011, I attended a travel writing conference in Cotacachi where I first heard about Cuenca. On impulse, I signed up for a real estate tour here before meeting Sheila in Quito to attend an International Living conference. The beauty and cultural treasures of this city amazed me! During the tour, we visited a small casita in the rural community of Challuabamba. I loved its simple, traditional Ecuadorian architecture and suddenly had this unexplainable urge to purchase it. It was serious enough that I arranged for Sheila to travel to Cuenca in order to see the casita for herself the day after she arrived.

**S:** I ended up missing the first day of the conference, but after visiting Cuenca and the property in Challuabamba, I could feel the same pull that it had on Todd, and even though it seemed irresponsible to make such a commitment in a foreign country about which we knew virtually nothing, something about it felt absolutely right. We decided to trust our instinct and moved ahead with the purchase.

**T:** From that moment forward, everything began to change for us, and I ended up retiring 6 months later.

### Why Ecuador, and specifically Cuenca?

**S:** As part of my eventual consideration of moving anywhere, I had two non-negotiables: I needed to live in a place that had a vibrant cultural life and holistic healthcare resources,

including ready access to organic food. Cuenca easily ticked both of those boxes.

**T:** Each time we came here, it was harder to leave and return to the States. We were growing very attached to the rich, yet simpler life that Cuenca offered.

**S:** After purchasing the property in 2011, we actually made 8 trips to Cuenca before I was convinced to move here. Every time we visited, I fell more in love with the tranquility of life here compared with the stress of our lives in Washington D.C.

**Are you completely retired? Do you work from here? If so, what type of work?**

**T:** I am a retired physician, but I have been involved with various kinds of volunteer work here in Cuenca.

**S:** Musicians never retire! I am involved with a number of music initiatives in the U.S. and recently, in other parts of the world. Here in Cuenca, I am the accompanist of the Cuenca International Chorale and the choir director for the International Christian Community. I am also involved with a local initiative that offers artistic and therapeutic work and supports a growing interest in Waldorf Education.

**What do you like to do for fun?**

**S:** I love to walk along the beautiful rivers or explore the hidden gems of El Centro. I also love to try out new restaurants and attend concerts and other cultural events.

**T:** I love to read and am a member of a men's book group. I run regularly and enjoy gardening and caring for our property in Challaubamba. I also enjoy photography. Sheila and I have always loved to travel, and we are finding some wonderful new places in the world to explore with our two adult children!

**What are your favorite things about Cuenca?**

**S:** I love the beauty, the culture, and how life here revolves around human-centered values.

**T:** I love the openness and warmth of the Ecuadorians.

**What are your least favorite things about Cuenca?**

**S:** The exhaust from the buses!

**T:** Ditto that!

**What, if anything, do you miss most from "back home"?**

**T:** I miss browsing in bookstores.

**S:** I miss being able to easily send and receive mail.

**Do you have any advice for people planning to move here or anything to share with newcomers to Cuenca?**

**S:** Learn Spanish! Being able to interact with the local people will change your whole experience of living here.

**T:** Genuinely reach out to the local people. They are gracious, kind, and fun loving!



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## Lago Molino

### Monthly Food Festivals in Beautiful Surroundings

By Ed Lindquist - Photographs courtesy of Lago Molino

When driving through lush farm lands to Yunguilla, have you ever wondered about the windmill in the middle of a lake? Well, I finally got the story.

The farm belongs to the family of Andy Gonzalez, chef and owner of the well known Sakura Sushi on Manuel Palacios off Remigio Crespo. Andy tells an amusing story of how his father went on a building spree constructing the lake, followed by a lake front cabin and finally a restaurant, fully equipped with a bowling alley and even a mechanical bull (something I haven't seen since bar hopping in Dallas).

Jumping to the present - The lake and surrounding restaurant is now an event center call Lago Molino, appropriately Spanish for "windmill in the lake." Lago Molino is now scheduling monthly Food Festivals, featuring various cuisine from around the world. The concept is great food, served family style. After a delicious meal, take it easy on the large terrace with views of a peaceful countryside, or have a walk around the lake. Make a day of it relaxing in the countryside. Knowing most expats are without cars, Lago Molino even provides round trip transportation to the farm for the English speaking community.

#### The Next Food Festival: HUECA - Saturday, Dec 3rd

In Ecuador, "HUECA" is a term for food consisting of dishes, inspired by Ecuadorian cuisine.

HUECA in its traditional form is disappearing from restaurants. HUECA dishes vary by each region of Ecuador and can be very elaborate. This Food Festival will introduce you to a style of cooking most expats have never been exposed too.

The complete dinner, including drink and round trip transportation from Cuenca is only \$39 per person. Of course, a cash bar is available featuring your favorite beers and cocktails. Seating is limited so reserve your place now. The weather is perfect for a day in the country.



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Lago Molino



Expats picking up fresh seafood at Los Roques on Remigio Crespo

Photographs courtesy of Los Roques

# Expats in



Expats enjoying new flavors from the grill at Brassa Restaurant Bar & Grill on Juan Iniguez

Photographs courtesy of Brassa

# the News



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#### MEET DR. PABLO

Many in the community already know Dr. Pablo for his humanitarian work as Medical Director of the expat supported charity - Helping Kids in Ecuador. Dr. Pablo is a member of the American Society of Plastic Surgeons and has a growing international reputation.

#### ACADEMIC TRAINING - AWARDS - POSITIONS HELD

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